

## **Remarks**

Claims 1-9, 12-17, 20, 21, 24, 25, and 27-47 are pending (of these claims 27 – 37 are withdrawn). Reconsideration and reexamination is requested.

### Claim Objections

Claims 1, 8, 9, 14, 38, 39, 43 and 45 have been amended in reply to the claim objections set forth in the office action of 4/08/2004.

### Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-9, 12 -17 and 24, and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Nishi (U.S. Patent No. 6,335,787). Additionally, claims 1-5, 9, 13-17, 20-21, and 24-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Magome et al. (2002/0145711). For the reasons set forth below, applicants believe that the claims are patentable.

Nishi discloses a projection exposure device including a gas changeover device (120A) which supplies nitrogen gas from a second air conditioner (117) to an illumination system unit (111), a reticle stage system unit (112), a wafer stage system unit (114) and a wafer transfer system unit (115) when an ordinary exposure sequence is performed. The gas changeover device (120A) also supplies ozone-free air from a first air conditioner (116) to the illumination system unit (111), the reticle stage system unit (112), the wafer stage system unit (114) and the wafer transfer system unit (115) when maintenance or experimental exposure is performed (see column 27, lines 34-53). Nishi also discloses a concentration sensor (137A-137D) installed in the illumination system unit (111), the reticle stage system unit (112), the wafer stage system unit (114) and the wafer transfer system unit (115) near the respective exhaust openings for monitoring whether the nitrogen concentration in each unit reaches the level of nitrogen concentration in ordinary air (see column 27, line 61 to column 28, line 7).

Magome et al. (2002/0145711) discloses an exposure apparatus for providing helium gas to a case (1), a sub-chamber (6) and a projection optical system (PL) and providing nitrogen gas to an environment chamber (7) (see paragraph [0065] and [0069]).

Neither Nishi, nor Magome et al., however, discloses that a control apparatus is connected or configured such that a barrel is selectively communicated with a first purge mechanism or a second purge mechanism based on a detection result of an operation condition detecting mechanism as recited in the amended independent claims 1, 14, 38 and 43 and their dependent claims 2-9, 12-13, 15-17, 20-21, 24-25, 39-42 and 44-47. Accordingly, the claims are believed patentable over Nishi and Magome et al.

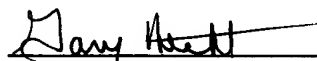
#### Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 38 - 47 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishi in view of Hasegawa et al. (EP 0676672). Claims 38 - 47 also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Magome et al. in view of Hasegawa et al. As discussed above, neither Nishi nor Magome et al. disclose or suggest a control apparatus connected or configured such that a barrel is selectively communicated with a first purge mechanism or a second purge mechanism based on a detection result of an operation condition detecting mechanism. Hasegawa et al. likewise does not provide the requisite teaching or suggestion. Accordingly, claims 38 - 47 are believed patentable.

Appln. No. 09/856,384  
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RCE and Reply to Office Action dated April 8, 2004

For the reasons set forth above, the claims are believed patentable.

Respectfully submitted,



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